

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

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JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-04 TRSE-00 USIA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6127

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 1830

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR BF

SUBJ: PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES

REF: STATE 233134

FROM THE AMBASSADOR FOR THE SECRETARY

1. I WAS PLEASED TO RECEIVE REFTEL STATING PRESIDENT FORD'S REAFFIRMATION OF THE PRIME IMPORTANCE PLACED ON US GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ABROAD TO REDUCE THE FLOW OF ILLICIT DRUGS TO THE US. I SHARE THAT VIEW OF THE PRIORITY TO BE GIVEN THIS TASK AND BELIEVE THAT THIS POST AND THE BAHAMAS ARE DEVOTING SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES TO ACCOMPLISHING IT.

2. THE FLOW OF ILLICIT DRUGS THROUGH THE BAHAMAS IS LARGELY DETERMINED BY ITS GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION BETWEEN JAMAICA AND THE US. OR, AS ONE BAHAMIAN OFFICIAL PUT IT, "BETWEEN THE SUPPLY AND THE DEMAND." THE DRUGS INVOLVED ARE ALMOST ENTIRELY CONFINED TO MARIJUANA AND HASHISH. WHILE BAHAMIANS VIEW THEIR NATION'S POSITION AS CHIEFLY A STOP-OVER IN A SUPPLY ROUTE, THEY ARE VERY WELL AWARE THAT MARIJUANA IS "LEAKING" FROM THAT ROUTE INTO LOCAL BAHAMIAN COMMUNITIES AS WELL. THUS, THEY ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF ILLICIT DRUGS OUT OF SELF-CONFIDENTIAL

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INTEREST AS WELL AS AN ASPECT OF COOPERATION WITH THE US.

CONCERN WITH THE PROBLEM EXTENDS TO THE VERY HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE BAHAMIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. SOME 25 PERCENT OF BAHAMIAN PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION OR CUSTOMS CONTROL WORK ARE ENGAGED IN NARCOTICS INTERDICTION ACTIVITIES. THIS FIGURE, TOGETHER WITH CORRESPONDING BUDGETARY RESOURCES, HAS RISED ANNUALLY AN AVERAGE OF FIVE PERCENT OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS AND IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE AT LEAST AT THAT RATE FOR THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS.

4. BAHAMIAN EFFORTS IN THIS AREA INVOLVE UNUSUALLY CLOSE COOPERATION WITH US ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL. MANY BAHAMIAN OFFICIALS HAVE RECEIVED DEA OR US CUSTOMS TRAINING IN THE NARCOTICS AREA -- 12 OFFICIALS WERE SPONSORED BY THE EMBASSY FOR SUCH TRAINING IN THE LAST YEAR ALONE. BAHAMIAN POLICE OFFICERS WORK EXTREMELY CLOSELY WITH DEA PERSONNEL IN MIAMI, AND ALSO MAINTAIN CONTACTS WITH CITY, COUNTY AND STATE OFFICIALS IN FLORIDA, AS WELL AS WITH OTHER FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES. BAHAMIAN CUSTOMS OFFICIALS COOPERATE ON A DAILY BASIS WITH THE US PRECLEARANCE DETAIL STATIONED AT NASSAU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AS WELL AS WITH US-BASED CUSTOMS SOURCES. THE BAHAMIAN MARINE POLICE DIVISION ALSO WORKS CLOSELY AND SMOOTHLY WITH THE US COAST GUARD (ESPECIALLY CG DISTRICT VII IN MIAMI, WHERE ADMIRAL WAGNER IN MY OPINION HAS DONE A SUPERB JOB OF COOPERATING IN ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES). WHERE CLOSE COOPERATION IN ALL THESE AREAS IS SO NECESSARILY INVOLVED, I OF COURSE MAINTAIN COORDINATION WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE EMBASSY'S NARCOTICS COORDINATOR. ALL IN ALL, I THINK THAT THE PRESENT SYSTEM, AN UNUSUALLY CLOSE AND INTEGRATED ONE RESULTING FROM THE PHYSICAL PROXIMITY BETWEEN U.S. AND BAHAMIAN ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL AND YEARS OF ASSOCIATION, HAS WORKED WELL. (PARETHETICALLY, I MIGHT NOTE THAT I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A PERSONAL VISIT TO OUR REGIONAL DIRECTORS OF DEA AND CUSTOMS WHO ARE LOCATED IN MIAMI. WHILE MY PURPOSE WAS FAMILIARIZATION WITH THEIR PROBLEMS AND PROCEDURES, ONE UNIVERSAL REACTION WHICH I ENCOUNTERED WAS THE HIGHLY SATISFACTORY COOPERATION THEY HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE GCOB IN THEIR DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS. THERE HAVE BEEN CASES IN THE PAST, HOWEVER, WHERE, BECAUSE OF THIS INTIMACY BETWEEN PARTICULAR

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US ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND THEIR RESPECTIVE BAHAMIAN COUNTERPARTS, A GIVEN ENFORCEMENT SITUATION HAS SEEN EACH SUCH AGENCY COMMUNICATING WITH ITS GCOB OPPOSITE NUMBER WITHOUT FULLY ADEQUATE PRIOR CONSULTATION IN THE US, SO THAT THE GCOB HAS HAD TO ASK THE EMBASSY TO UNDERTAKE AT A LATE DATE WHAT PROBABLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION AMONG DOMESTIC US BODIES PRECEDING THE APPROACH TO THE BAHAMAS. I BELIEVE THAT THIS UNDERSTANDABLE BUT RATHER ANOMALOUS SITUATION IS

IMPROVING).

5. IN SUM, I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION
WITHIN THE GCOB TO THE PROBLEM OF STEMMING THE FLOW OF ILL-
ICIT DRUGS AND THAT BAHAMIAN EFFORTS TO COOPERATE IN THIS AREA
ARE MAINTAINED AT A VERY ENCOURAGING LEVEL. YOU CAN BE SURE
THAT MY COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT BOTH THE BAHAMIAN AWARENESS
AND THE LEVEL OF BILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN US WILL REMAIN
A PRIORITY AT THIS EMBASSY AND THAT I WILL DO EVERYTHING IN
MY POWER TO PROMOTE OUR COMMON ENDEAVORS IN THIS AREA.
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